

REMARKS

STATUS OF THE CLAIMS

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1-3 and 6-8 have been cancelled without prejudice, and claims 4, 5 and 9-15 have been amended. No new matter is being presented, and approval of the amended claims is respectfully requested.

It is respectfully submitted that claims 4, 5 and 9-15 are pending and under consideration.

REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1-3, 6-8, 11 AND 15 UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102(b) AS BEING ANTICIPATED BY MASAKI ET AL. (U.S. PATENT NO. 4,492,847)

The rejections of claims 1-3, 6-8, 11 and 15 are respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested.

Claims 1-3 and 6-8 have been cancelled without prejudice. Therefore, the prior rejection is moot.

Claims 11 and 15 are dependent claims and now depend from amended claim 4, which the Examiner has considered to contain allowable subject matter. Therefore, claims 11 and 15 should be allowable, and the prior rejection is considered moot.

REJECTION OF CLAIMS 12 AND 13 FOR OBVIOUSNESS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103(a) AS BEING UNPATENTABLE OVER MASAKI ET AL. (U.S. PATENT NO. 4,492,847)

The rejections of claims 12 and 13 are respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested.

Dependent claims 12 and 13, as amended, incorporate the patentable features of amended claim 4, which the Examiner has considered to contain allowable subject matter. Therefore, amended claims 12 and 13 should now be allowable and the prior rejection is considered moot.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

On page 5 of the Office Action, the Examiner notes that claims 4, 5, 9, 10 and 14 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 4 and 5 have been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of claims 1, 2 and 3. Likewise, claims 9 and 10 have been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of claims 6, 7 and 8. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claims 4, 5,

9, and 10 are now in condition for allowance.

The remaining pending claims 11-15 are dependent directly from allowable amended independent claim 4. Therefore, claims 11-15 should be allowable, and the prior rejections and objections are considered moot.

CONCLUSION

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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